

Water the Roots 5

Mind Management

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati
The Third Generation



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

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Introduction

Through yoga we attempt to become human beings. The aim of yoga is not *samadhi* or self-realization. The aim of life is harmony, and through harmony we become full human beings. In the absence of harmony we are only reacting, and when we react, it is just animal behaviour. Therefore, remember that life has much more wealth to give us than we now possess. The wealth of a human being is not a good bank balance, financial security or property. The wealth of a human being is to be a human being, one who lives in peace with himself and in harmony with the world. The beginning of yoga is learning how to manage the mind. It begins with the first sutra of Sage Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*:

Atha yoga anushaasanam.

Now, yoga is discipline.

Through discipline, awareness, recognition and understanding yourself, you can manage, channel, direct and harmonize your mind. You can awaken the dormant potential of the mind.

The yoga of the future is not going to be hatha yoga or raja yoga. The yoga of the future is going to be discovery of the human mind and management of different personality traits in order to become one with the underlying harmony. Human qualities manifest only when we are at peace and in harmony with ourselves. This harmony is then projected outside. It is a personal experience which is later converted

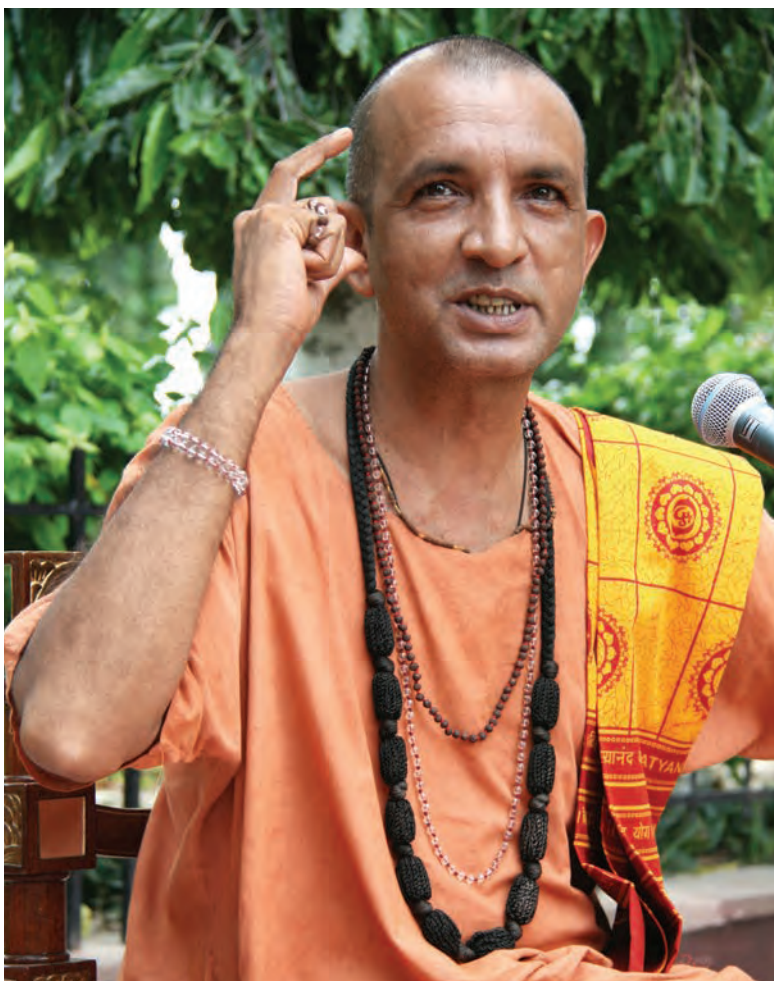
into a social experience, a social environment. In this way, it becomes possible to bring about a qualitative change in the individual as well as in society. This has always been the main aim of yoga.

According to modern psychology, there is the conscious mind, the subconscious mind and the unconscious mind. Yoga says there is the active mind, the passive mind and the dormant mind. The active mind is linked with the conscious mind, the passive mind with the subconscious mind and the dormant mind with the unconscious mind. According to yoga there is another state, the supermind or awakened mind, where there is no differentiation or distinction between the different aspects of the mind, such as *manas*, the process of reflection, *buddhi*, the process of intellect, *chitta*, memory, and *ahamkara*, the ego principle. When studying the mind in yoga, whatever aspect of the mind we talk about, we have to know whether it is in the unconscious state, the subconscious state or the conscious state.

Manifesting harmony

People have to be happy knowing who they are. We are weak. We are influenced by the negativity and the positivity we encounter in life and our responses are guided by those negative or positive inputs. Where is our natural being? We are not aware of who we are, what we become and what other people project onto us. This is where meditation is useful. It allows us to realize the individual or personal nature, identify with that nature, overcome the quirks of our nature and personality and thus experience inner growth.

There is no point talking philosophically about how the memory, the ego or the intellect work. They work, that is enough, but we must know how we can handle the situations and conditions we face in life to improve our self-perspective. We use meditation as the means of reflecting on our personality, our character, and discovering our Strengths, Weaknesses, Ambitions and Needs. Identifying these four areas is known as the SWAN principle.



With this new insight we can harmonize the inner being through the use of mantra and sankalpa each morning, and when we review the day's events, each evening, as a meditative practice of *jnana yoga*, the yoga of wisdom.

Combined with asana, pranayama and yoga nidra relaxation, these are the tools that will lead to enhanced awareness and harmonious participation in life. You will be known as a balanced person. If somebody tells you that they find you to be a balanced

person, that is the biggest attribute you can have for it means that harmony and balance is manifesting in your life. It is all you need to make your life and the world beautiful.

When you are able to undergo these processes, you find that your habits change and your lifestyle changes. You also find that your attitudes, perspectives and vision change, and there is a feeling of completeness and wholeness. With this sense of wholeness, the journey into yoga begins. You move forward to experience your life unfolding, growing and evolving.

Changing the vision through re-education

Yoga has never been a system to replace other beliefs, cultures or mentalities. In fact, Sri Swamiji calls yoga the emergency medicine. When you are having a heart attack, you go to an intensive care unit until you are well enough to move on to another form of treatment. Similarly, when there is degeneration of the mind, when the faculties are suppressed, when you are not able to cope with life's situations, yoga comes in as the emergency medicine. This emergency medicine allows you to cope with the circumstances until you are able to develop a different, higher vision and perspective of yourself. Then you can go out and lead a normal life, with control, discipline and awareness.

When people find their balance, yoga will again recede into the background. In the state of balance, other qualities will be expressed which may not necessarily be yogic but which will be relevant in this club of *Prakriti*, Nature, of which we are all life members. We move with that level of awareness for some time. Situations change, conditions change, the environment changes. When we again feel we are being inhibited and unable to express our nature and personality creatively, we will return to yoga. In the meantime yoga will be maintained and thought about by the seers who are concerned with our welfare.

In order to improve the external conditions, we first need to improve the internal conditions. Human nature is composed of basic qualities, three of which are important: creativity,

openness and balance. These are the foundation stones on which the building of life is constructed. We have to change our vision and perspective by re-educating ourselves, by integrating the concept of self-knowledge and self-discipline into education. The educational system has to change because it influences not only how we are going to act, but also creates the necessary samskaras that provide an outlet for our expressions.

The integrated sadhanas collected here as *Water the Roots* are part of that education which you can begin today. If you wish to speed up your progress in developing self-awareness and the ability to live harmoniously, practise the capsule sadhana, SWAN meditation and keep a spiritual diary.

The spiritual journey is necessary to realize your full potential, change your vision and employ your new insight to manage the mind and live in harmony.

WATER THE ROOTS

Once, when I was a child, Sri Swamiji had to go out of the ashram for some time. He loved plants. Inside the ashram there were many varieties of plants, and there was a beautiful garden with trees, flowers, fruits and shrubs. I was really only a little boy, but I helped to look after the plants. Knowing he could be away for a few days, he asked me to look after the plants as best I could. I assured him I would definitely look after them, and he placed his trust in me and left for the journey.

When he returned a week later he found that most of the plants were looking a bit dull and wilted. He called me and said, "Did you look after the



plants?" I said, "Yes, I have taken every possible care to ensure that your plants survived." He asked, "How did you look after them?" I said, "Every morning I would clean the leaves and flowers with a cloth. If I saw any insects, I would remove them and I have really worked hard. I wiped the dust from the leaves, from the petals, from the trunks. I don't know why they look so droopy and dull, maybe they don't like me?" He asked, "Did you give them water? Did you water the roots?" I said, "That I forgot."

Then he explained to me that this relates to our life. We take care of the external growth but we do not take care of our inner growth. The external plant, which we have in the form of the body, is taken care of in different ways, but the roots of the plant, which extend deep into our mind, are hardly seen.

What does a tree represent in our life? The tree represents the body which is the medium of expression in this worldly plane, the body with all its faculties of actions and senses. The flowers and fruits represent the results of the actions of the senses and the body. This is the part of the self with which we identify, and which is above the surface. We go around with a dusting cloth and shine up our achievements, we scrub ourselves with soap, we remove the insects which attack us in the form of viruses and bacteria and competition, using medications or anything effective.

Although we try to maintain the health of the part of the tree that we see above ground, our body, rarely do we water the roots, the mind, which is underground, and from which we derive our nourishment and strength. In the absence of water our life becomes weak.

The water which has to be given to this plant of life is not pleasure but spiritual awareness. It is this spiritual awareness which sustains life. This is not just my statement, it has been said by saints and seers of all ages, but still this idea has not actually taken root in our lives. For whatever reasons, we still find ourselves to be very much involved in physical external experiences and interactions. However, there have been some systems of thought which have emphasized that one

has to look after the internal manifestations, the different levels of consciousness, so that the roots which extend under the surface are also taken care of. This is true spirituality: the ability to take care of the seen and the unseen, both at the same time, and spirituality begins with making an effort to realize our internal potential.

How can we develop?

We are constantly evolving, whether consciously or unconsciously it doesn't matter, the journey is there. We cannot stop the process of evolution just as we cannot stop the growth and decay of the body from the time of its birth until the time of its death. However, yogis have believed that with awareness, we can quicken this process of evolution positively and reach a level where the optimum use of the strengths of human nature and personality can be experienced. The direction of human evolution is to attain fulfilment, *poornata*, completeness.

The word *yoga* means union, and philosophically we might say that this union is of the individual consciousness with the higher consciousness, but that is setting the target far beyond our reach. We have to begin with the experience of union at a physical level: awakening of physical harmony, union of the faculties of the body and the brain, union of the faculties of brain and mind, union of the faculties of mind and psyche, union of the faculties of psyche and spirit.

We have to go step by step and experience union at different levels. Therefore, various systems of yoga have evolved, some are physical in nature, some are pranic, psychic or spiritual in nature. As we evolve through the various practices of yoga, harmonizing the body and the various layers of the mind and personality, we come to a point where attitude, performance and behaviour undergo a transformation.

Managing ourselves

Yoga is a process of management. Managing the states of the body, mind, emotions and spirit, nothing more than that. The

moment we are able to manage these various dimensions of our personality, we establish ourselves in yoga, and this process of management begins with the body.

The body has certain limitations which are experienced in the form of stiffness, aches and pains, and they have to be managed. A good example of this process of management is in the *Yoga Sutras* of Sage Patanjali, where he defines *asana* as a posture in which one is steady, comfortable and at ease with oneself. This is the final definition of *asana*, but in order to come to that level where one is at ease, comfortable and steady in the posture, one has to go through a process of practice. The process of practice is learning how to manage the various conditions of the body.

It is the same with mind management. The ideal state of mind is one-pointed, without dissipation, without distraction, in which the force of will is concentrated. This is not the force of will in the negative sense, which can be hard-heartedness, "What I say is right and I don't believe anything else." No, it is not like that. The ideal concentrated mind is where the faculties of the mind become like a laser beam which can cut through steel or perform a delicate operation on the human eye without burning any other tissue. The sharpening of the mental faculty should be so acute that it will only go where it is directed.

In order to come to this stage, there has to be a process of practice and effort, which in yoga has been provided by the practices of *pratyahara*, such as *yoga nidra* and *antar mouna*. This leads to the one-pointedness of *dharana*, concentration, and the flowering of *bhakti*, devotion, *karma*, action, and *jnana*, wisdom.

The manifestation of samadhi

Ultimately, by passing through these different stages of self-management, we come to a point where *samadhi* does not become or remain a self-oriented process, but it becomes a universal experience. I have felt strongly in my life that if *samadhi* is the aim of yoga, in which one isolates oneself from



the world, I would rather not practise yoga at all. I can't accept this self-isolation from the world for it is a selfish attitude, but now it has become my understanding that *samadhi* is actually a state in which unity is felt between an individual and the cosmos. That unity manifests in selflessness in our behaviour, attitude and daily life.

A new vision of yoga evolves when we start asking ourselves about who we are and what we are doing here. This questioning takes an intense form of self-analysis and self-discovery.

When I was in the USA I met a person who was a follower of Ramana Maharshi who said to me, "Swamiji, I ask myself every morning at breakfast time, 'Who am I?' and that gives me fulfilment for the rest of the day." Of course, I didn't say much, I just encouraged him to question himself at the time of lunch and dinner as well. However, just thinking about it is not enough. There has to be intensity of thought and feeling, and one must work to experience that. This is where the beauty of yoga lies, working on oneself in order to awaken that understanding and that experience.

It has been our experience that the various movements of yoga in the world have confined themselves to teaching yoga for the management of physical states and problems with little emphasis on mind management and no emphasis on spiritual understanding. Of course, that is now changing. In fact, many times we see two extremes: one group can be too spiritual and lose touch with reality, and another group can be too physical and lose contact with the mental reality.

Head, heart and hands

Swami Satyananda always said that a human being has the faculties of head, heart and hands which are used day in and day out. If we deal with the awakening of one faculty only, the growth is lopsided. There should be a good combination of practices which can fulfil the need of head, heart and hands in order to uplift a person. It is appropriate for us all to take a *sankalpa*. *Sankalpa* means a resolution, and this resolution should be that we must learn to take care of our entire personality.

We must take care of our whole being, not only the part which grows above ground but also the part that spreads underground, and that can be tapped with the practices of yoga. The roots of our life are our deeper inner nature and the experience of spirit. The caring aspect of life should and will happen when we are able to incorporate a balanced yogic structure in our life. It is with this awareness that we must go deeper into the practices and understanding of yoga. Only then can we find peace within.

There is a statement of Swami Satyananda which I remember and keep close to my heart, "There is no noise in the world and there is no peace in the mountains." There is no peace in isolation and there is no disturbance in a noisy situation, they both exist within every person. If one is not at peace with oneself, then even in the most remote corner of the world one will not attain peace. If one is at peace with oneself, then even in the middle of the market one would be at total peace.

Peace is something which you all want desperately in your life. You search for peace all around, but you have never tried to discover the cause of that disturbance which does not allow you to experience peace. You must first know the cause of a disturbance and when you know the cause it is easy to find a solution and attain peace. Therefore, it is my request and suggestion that all of you find the cause, and then you will find the solution to a problem. Don't look for simple solutions in life. You have to make choices which will be conducive to your own development and they should also be conducive in helping, supporting and assisting others. That is the only way to change yourself from deep inside.

Let Your will be done

No matter what we do, there should also be the awareness of a higher will. The attitude of experiencing that higher will is 'Let Your will be done'. This is an important aspect of our life. The realities of life have to be understood. If we wish to close our eyes and not see the world and reality it is our choice, but if we can open them and see the beauty of the environment, we are at peace.

In this context it is also necessary to see the force which guides our life, the force that nourishes the roots of the tree. Roots by themselves cannot sustain a tree. They derive nutrients from the ground around them. In the same way, we derive nutrients from another source and people have given names to that source. We should not concern ourselves with the different names of the source, but definitely we should be aware that we derive strength, inspiration and force from the source of spiritual awareness. Only then we can derive true contentment in life.

There is a beautiful integration of the human faculties. The faculties of the body merge with those of the mind, those of the mind merge with those of the spirit and then we become whole, complete, and that is the aim of human life. When we begin to experience this completeness in life, then our attitudes and actions change, and our sensitivity and our whole life changes.



ATTITUDINAL YOGA

As human beings we are weak. Where is the substance in our lives which can give us an insight into the stable core nature of personality? We may be happy, just, content, virtuous, pious, a good Samaritan, but that does not reflect the stable aspect of our personality. That only reflects the expressive aspect of our nature.

Different dimensions of personality

Every personality has different dimensions. The first dimension of personality is expressive, how you project yourself to other people. When you look at somebody, you always have to try to be on your best behaviour. You always smile, you can't frown. When you are with somebody, you have to try to be a good person, even though all hell may be breaking loose in your home. This first dimension is controlled by the ego principle, status, recognition, friendship and desires.

The second dimension of personality is how stable you are in your belief, approach, thoughts, feelings, sentiments, ideas, devotion, desires, trust and faith. This aspect can be seen. For example, we may describe a person with strong convictions as having a rigid personality. This second dimension of stability and instability is connected with control of the modifications of your mind, the *vrittis*, how alert and aware you are of what is happening in the mind.

There is another dimension of personality, one of simplicity and innocence. This nature is the one which takes you clear to the spirit, to the divine, to God, and frees you from the trappings of the world. Therefore, it has always been said that the guidelines for spiritual aspirants are to be as simple, as innocent and as free as possible, but with discrimination. You have to respond differently to different situations.

It is said in the *Yoga Sutras* (1:33), 'Be friendly to those who are happy. Be compassionate to those who are suffering and in pain. Be happy for those who are virtuous and don't be bothered by those who are crooked'. A yogi should express friendship towards those who are happy and content. Generally we compare ourselves with such people and we become jealous. Why jealous? Why not friendship? Why not be happy for them too?

The statement goes on to say, 'Be compassionate towards those who are unhappy'. In our lives the opposite happens. If we identify somebody as a competitor, our rival, we become happy when they are unhappy. We say, "Good, God is punishing them, let God punish them more." Why can't we be

compassionate towards our rival, our competitor and enemy, at the time of their unhappiness, in the moment of their pain and suffering? It is possible. The *Yoga Sutras* tell us to develop a different nature with different vrittis: *maitri*, friendship, *karuna*, compassion, and *mudita*, gladness.

‘Be happy and glad for those who are virtuous’. We can try to define virtue from our own understanding. What is the social aspect, the personal aspect and the spiritual aspect of virtue? After all, we do live in a society and we do identify with social as well as personal virtues. We have saints, great sannyasins and heroes like Sri Rama to exemplify spiritual virtues.

The last part of the statement is, ‘Ignore the crooked, the unvirtuous’. How can one ignore the crooked? It is not possible because they always exist, but we can definitely transcend and overcome the negativity that we tend to feel when we are in the company of the crooked. We can maintain our balance.

Strengthen your attitude

In this way, we develop the stable aspect of our personality. This has been the aim of yoga all the way from beginning to end. Our knowledge of yoga is not deep. Therefore, we identify yoga with asana and pranayama, and we think its aim is eight hours of meditation, so many hours of sadhana, so many hours of mantra, and the more we do, the greater sadhakas we think we are becoming. However, that is not true.

The problem is that we have to be careful what we say because if we emphasize too much that these are only the preparatory practices, nobody would practise yoga systematically, and that is necessary when we try to change, transform or overcome our limited nature. Therefore, we say, “Okay, continue to practise yoga. This is your sadhana, practise this asana, practise this pranayama, practise this meditation,” and people feel happy with only that much. However, the reality is that fifty asanas may make us strong in the body but they won’t do anything to our head. Eight hours of meditation will only give us the satisfaction that, “Oh yes, I

was closer to myself and my God while I was meditating,” but when we open our eyes we identify with the world. There is separation between us and our God. Eight hours of meditation does not change the mind fundamentally. Yoga practices are like hooks to which we tie a wild, untamed animal for some time to make it quiet.

Apart from the yoga practices in a classroom, there has to be another practice, another yoga which is attitudinal yoga. Not hatha yoga, not raja yoga, not karma yoga, not bhakti yoga, not kriya yoga, not kundalini yoga, but attitudinal yoga. Awareness of what is happening in the mind, observation of that process, transformation of that process, overcoming the limitations which bind us in our day-to-day expressions in life. It can only happen when we are super alert. Not just alert, but super alert.

Your attention is fragmented at present. When you hear the words ‘become aware’, what do you become aware of? Try this experiment. Become aware of everything right now, in this moment. What are you becoming aware of during this moment? Nothing. You may say, “I am watching the body,” but even that is incomplete because you are not even aware of the heartbeat, the blinking of the eyelids or even the flow of blood through the veins and arteries, so even the physical awareness is not complete.

If the teacher says, “Become aware of the mind,” what aspect of the mind do you become aware of? Just what is happening at the surface level, nothing more than that. Your awareness is the most fragmented aspect of your individuality. There is no doubt about it. Your awareness is like a jigsaw puzzle with all the pieces mixed up together. When the teacher says, “Become aware,” you pick up one piece of the puzzle and look at it, then pick up another piece and try to fit it in – only that much. You never make the whole picture.

In attitudinal yoga, an effort has to be made to put the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle together and see the complete picture. This takes time. Vision of the divine is not the priority, but preparation of the untranscendental self. Getting the eyesight back is

important for a blind person, not having a glimpse of the sun. We always say, “Oh I wish I could see the sun.” We don’t even have the eyes and we are trying to see the sun.

Let us make an effort to go to the hospital where we can have an operation to give us new sight, new vision. Yoga, meditation and attitudinal yoga is the process which gives us the eyesight. It sounds simple but it can be a sadhana of many, many lives. It is not something that any one of us has the capacity to fulfil in a few years or in one lifetime.

These things have to develop naturally. Be determined, apply your will, and say, “I will achieve.” In the race between the hare and the tortoise, the tortoise continued to walk at his own pace and eventually won the race.

BEFRIENDING THE MIND

The mental dimension is possibly the most important aspect of yoga. The human mind has always been a mystery. How does the mind behave? How does the mind work? How does the mind interact with other people and the environment? How does the mind attain wisdom, and how does the mind realize itself? There are no absolute answers, only an ongoing process of discovery.

In our lives, we can definitely see that the mind plays an important role in our expressions and behaviour. But how do we train the mind? How do we awaken the potential of the mind through yoga? People who study yoga say it is necessary to control the mind, but people who practise yoga say it is necessary to become friends with the mind.

Once a king was given four beautiful but wild horses, which nobody could ride. He issued a proclamation offering the hand of his daughter in marriage and a handsome reward to anybody who could train them. Many great trainers tried, but without success. One day, however, a man appeared and said, “I will train them on the condition that they are left free for a year.” A year later he returned, riding one of the horses with the other three following behind obediently.

When the king asked the secret of his success, the man replied that he had simply made friends with the horses and let them be free. When they ran, he ran with them, when they stopped, he stopped, when they ate, he would eat. Eventually,



the horses allowed him to touch them and then, gradually, to ride them. By making friends with the horses, they came to trust and accept him.

As you know, once you become friendly with yourself, you begin to remove the fears, insecurities, anxieties and stresses that afflict the mind, and you are able to direct the mind in a better way. What did Alexander the Great do when he was given a horse that was afraid of its own shadow and would not allow anyone to ride it? He simply turned the horse around and when it could not see its own shadow and was not frightened, the horse allowed Alexander to ride it.

This indicates that we have to know ourselves. We have to allow the fears and insecurities of the mind to leave before we are able to direct it. However, meditation is a broad subject with a number of dimensions, so the story also indicates that we have to manage the total mind as we need to make friends with the four aspects of the mind: our interactive mind, the intellect, the memory and the ego, and harmonize them – then we win the beautiful princess!

FROM ILLNESS TO TOTAL HEALTH

Illness is the outcome of unresolved problems. When we are unable to resolve the problems we face, whether environmental, social, personal or within the family, the effect of those unresolved problems manifests in the form of illness. We can say that the patient is not the victim of nature, an unhealthy lifestyle or pollution, but is suffering because of unresolved problems. We have to learn how to cope and deal with these problems at various levels of our personality. It is not enough to say, “Okay, I am suffering from ill health, I am suffering from disease and I have to treat it physically or psychologically.” Human beings are also subject to the influence of genetics, circumstances, events and the environment and therefore, we also need to develop an awareness of how we interact with and react to such situations.

Each one of us is continually reacting, there is rarely an original, spontaneous or reasonable action. We react to people, we react to what they say, we react to our pleasure and to our pain and suffering. Our entire life goes from one stage to another reacting to situations rather than consciously choosing actions. Only when we are able to interpret a situation properly will it become meaningful. This is an important point to remember, because it is from this point that we begin the process of realigning our body with our nature, our mind and our consciousness. This is the beginning of the first step towards the attainment of total health.

The process of self-observation or self-understanding leads to the experience of optimum health and wellbeing. Yoga therapy does not merely aim for removal of the symptoms which we have become aware of. Yoga therapy is not a method of treating an illness or a disease. Rather, it is a method of treating the person who is suffering from a condition by making him or her aware of the personality, and how the personality interacts in the world at the external level and with the consciousness at the subtle level.

When we are able to do this, we find that our habits change and our lifestyle changes. We also find that our attitudes, perspectives and vision change, and there is a feeling of completeness and wholeness. With this sense of wholeness, the journey into yoga begins. We move forward to experience our life unfolding, growing and evolving. We experience the beginning of yogic philosophy.

What is yoga philosophy? The word 'philosophy' means 'love of knowledge', but in Sanskrit the word is *darshan*, to realize, to see. How do we realize yoga? Head, heart and hands: intellect, emotions and actions – these three qualities are important and need to be balanced and harmonized. This is the beginning of yoga philosophy.

Yoga philosophy does not begin with high-flying ideas of divine consciousness manifesting in the human body, but with recognition of the qualities that are inherent in our lives, that can be unified and harmonized: the qualities of head, heart



and hands. The moment we are able to observe the qualities of the mind, the reactions, actions and expressions of the mind, when we are able to know the expressions of the emotional nature and how we interact with other people and with our environment, we obtain a more complete and balanced perspective. We perceive and work towards positive solutions for all. Life becomes creative as our feelings, thoughts and actions are aligned, straightforward and innocent. When we are able to bring these three areas together, yoga philosophy is being lived.

THE GARDENER OF LIFE

Many times I hear from different people that one has to be a warrior and win. I disagree with them, because a warrior wins by shedding the blood of many. A warrior wins by suppressing other people, and that is not what we are looking for.

We have to be farmers, we have to be gardeners. We have been given a barren piece of land and through our effort we have to convert that barren piece of land into a beautiful garden. Before that garden can be made we have to

work hard. We have to remove the rocks, remove the weeds, mix the earth, soften the earth and then we have to make proper beds.

Once those beds have the nourishments and nutrients required for the plant, we plant the seed, but we have to take care of that seed. We don't allow animals to come and dig it out – and animals do dig out the spiritual seed from our minds and hearts. Jealousy is an animal, anger is an animal, hatred is an animal, envy is an animal, greed is an animal. The negativity which disturbs us is part of a powerful nature, and as animals they create disturbance in our peace and harmony. They disturb the seed which we are trying to plant.

If you plant the seeds and rabbits come and dig them up, what would you do? You would pick up your gun and shoot the rabbits. Can you do the same with your anger, envy, hatred and jealousy? Can you shoot your negative tendencies or your masks? You should be able to shoot them and protect the seed which you have planted, and look after it until it grows into a tree and can manage itself.

Just as little children need care and protection in their young days, and can be free and independent and go their own way when adult, you are in the early stages of looking after your little spiritual child. You protect a child from cold and heat, sun and wind. In the same manner, protect your spiritual life from attractions and repulsions, and allow the spiritual life to grow naturally.

Through discipline you ensure that the tree grows straight. There may be times when you need to go with secateurs and trim the tree from all sides. When you need the secateurs and you need to trim the tree, come to the ashram and we will provide you with secateurs and tell you which branch to lop off. The core work, however, the protection and nurturing, has to be done by you all the time and then your effort will bear fruit one day.

You can be the farmer of your life and ensure that what is beautiful and best, good and uplifting, finds a spot in the garden of your life. Live with a sankalpa that you will become

a gardener of yourself. Seeds we can provide from India, after all, yoga has come from India, but you have to look after your own garden of life. Be the best farmer and feed many, share with many the strength and beauty of life.

Hari Om Tat Sat





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